1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

Sierra Tarascans
Mestizo

585 The following day there is a ritual meal in the house of the bride to which come the bride's relatives and many friends. The women of Chilchota often dress in traditional Tarascan costume for this meal, wearing the *rollo* or pleated skirt. They also wear straw hats much decorated with flowers and paper streamers. Men dress in *calzones* or trousers of Indian style. If they have money, a band is hired and the group dances at every corner. The meal served consists of boiled cabbage (without meat or meat broth) and beef tripe cooked with herbs and chile.

Soon after the wedding, the groom takes the bride's parents one or two large baskets of bread, chocolate, sugar, and from $10 to $100 (depending on his economic status) to show his thanks. There is some sort of ceremony in the house of the bride's parents.

585 In San Juan Parangaricutiro, also primarily
535 a Mestizo town, the male and female relatives of the bride dance in the streets on the day of the wedding. The group has a band and dances at each street intersection in the town, the men in one file, and the women in another. The men make a circuit of the women's file and return to their places. The women do the same and then the group moves to another corner. The persons in the files are arranged according to their stature. A sister of the bride accompanies the group, and represents her. The night after the wedding the relatives of the groom do the same, lighting their way with pitch pine torches.

● 588 A dozen or more families in Cherán live in
586 "free union," that is, a couple lives together without marriage. In most cases one or both parties to the arrangement have been married previously and divorced according to Cherán standards but not according to law. The majority of such free unions are said to result in successful households, and children of such unions suffer no stigma. Children of free unions inherit from their parents in the same fashion as children of legal or church marriages. This type of union is said to be fairly recent, and at first persons living in this fashion were not permitted by the priest to hold any church office or to act as godparents. Children of free unions were also refused baptism. In

588 586 recent years it is said that these restrictions have disappeared.

One reason for the free union is the difficulty of securing a legal divorce. Such a divorce can be granted only by a court of first instance (*juzgado de primer instancia*). The nearest court of this kind is in Uruapan, and to secure a divorce requires many trips to Uruapan and an outlay of more money than most Cherán residents can afford. Moreover, most people do not understand the needed steps.

586 Causes of divorce are drunkenness, wife beating, failure to support the family, or abandoning the family for another woman on the part of the man. On the part of the woman, infidelity is an important cause. Lack of children is rarely if ever the direct cause of divorce, and is not recognized as a sufficient reason. Incompatibility evidently may play a part also. Uncles and grandfathers of the married couple and the godparents of the marriage intervene if a marriage is not going smoothly, and attempt to persuade the couple to change their habits.

In all cases of divorce for whatever cause, the officials of the *municipio* investigate. If they find the divorce not justified, the officials may force the couple to continue living together. If the causes are deemed sufficient, the officials do not interfere, although they may supervise disposition of children so that they will have the best care. If children are less than 6 or 7 they are usually put in charge of the mother. Over that age they are usually given to the parent best able to rear them properly. If the mother is industrious and the father a drunkard, the children will be given to the mother, but if the mother is careless of her obligations, the father will receive the children. Dislike or quarrels rarely arise between relatives of a divorced couple. In free unions, as in mar-
[593] riages of widows or widowers, sometimes a parent is jealous of the spouse's children by a previous marriage, sometimes not.

ADULT LIFE

885 585 Entry into adult status is closely associated with marriage. Normally a child is not consulted in family affairs until he is married; the only exceptions are a few families where youths have not married at the customary ages. Usu-